

If You Think You May Need Hearing Aids, You Should:

Have a hearing evaluation performed by a licensed audiologist before making any purchases.

Many audiologists prescribe, fit, and sell hearing aids. An audiologist who sells hearing aids must be licensed with the Bureau of Hearing Aid Dispensers as a hearing aid dispenser, in addition to being licensed by the Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology Board as an audiologist.

COMPLAINTS — What To Do If You Have a Complaint

To file a complaint, you may call the Board office at (916) 263-2666 and request a complaint form. Or, you may send a letter to the Board office summarizing your grievance. The Board reviews complaints pertaining to fraud, incompetence, unlicensed practice, sexual misconduct, or conviction of a criminal offense related to the profession. Complaints regarding general business practices or personality conflicts are not within the jurisdiction of the Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology Board.

The Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology Board (SLPAB)



The Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology Board is a state agency within the Department of Consumer Affairs. The Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology Board licenses and regulates speech-language pathologists and audiologists. The Board's mission is to protect the consumer by requiring adherence to statutes and regulations designed to ensure the qualifications and competency of providers of speech-language pathology and audiology services.

Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology Board

1422 Howe Avenue, Suite 3
Sacramento, CA 95825-3204

(916) 263-2666

FAX: (916) 263-2668

website: www.dca.ca.gov/slpab

email: slpab@dca.ca.gov

A CONSUMER GUIDE TO

AUDIOLOGY



What You Should Know About Hearing Problems

A Consumer Guide to **AUDIOLOGY**

What Is an Audiologist?

An audiologist is a licensed health care professional who identifies, assesses, and manages disorders of the auditory, balance, and other neural systems.

How to Locate an Audiologist

Audiologists work in a variety of settings, including private practices, clinics, hospitals, and schools. To locate a licensed audiologist, you may obtain a referral from your primary care physician or pediatrician, a public health nurse, or a personal friend. Otolaryngologists (ear, nose, and throat doctors) may also refer you or have an audiologist on staff. You can also check under "Audiologists" in the yellow pages of your telephone book.

Speech and hearing clinics may be available:

- ◆ In the local community.
- ◆ At a college or university.
- ◆ In a hospital or medical clinic.

You may call professional organizations for assistance in locating an audiologist. The Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology Board cannot refer you to a practitioner.

Guidelines for Judging an Audiologist's Professional Qualifications



To practice in the state of California, an individual must hold a current, valid, audiology license from the Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology Board.

To get a license, the individual must have obtained the appropriate master's degree or equivalent, completed the specified number of clinical practicum hours, worked in the audiology field under supervision for no less than 36 weeks, and passed the national written exam.

Certain settings are exempt from licensure (such as public preschools, elementary or secondary schools, and federal agencies).

You may check the status of an audiologist's license by calling the Board at (916) 263-2666.

When to Use the Services of an Audiologist



You would seek the services of an audiologist if you or someone you know is having difficulty hearing.

It may be difficult for you to determine if a child is having hearing problems. You might consult an audiologist for a child if:

- ◆ The child has difficulty understanding what people are saying.
- ◆ You think the child is speaking differently than other children of the same age.
- ◆ As an infant, the child does not respond to sounds or people's voices.

What the Audiologist Will Do:

- ◆ Test how well you hear sounds of different pitches.
- ◆ Test how well you understand speech at different levels of loudness.
- ◆ Do special tests, if necessary, to further identify what type of hearing problem you have.

An audiologist can evaluate your hearing, determine whether you have a hearing loss, and make recommendations for hearing health care. This may include a referral to a physician or recommendations for hearing aids or other amplifying devices or methods to modify the listening environment.



To Help Your Professional Relationship With Your Audiologist, You Should:

Answer all health-related questions completely and accurately.

Ask questions to help you understand the results of your hearing tests and the recommendations of your audiologist.